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Inside Information

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FOOD & FITNESS CAMPAIGN DETAILED

Details were announced for USDA's 1985-86 Food & Fitness Campaign by Assistant Secretary Orville G. Bentley on November 1. The announcement came during the USDA/FDA-sponsored Food Editor's Conference in New York City.

The theme for the year is "Food & Fitness: An Every Day Event." Several USDA agencies (Human Nutrition Information Service, Agricultural Marketing Service, Agricultural Research Service, Extension Service, and Farmers Home Administration) furnished exhibits and handouts. Among the handouts was an information kit developed and prepared by Lillie Vincent of the Office of Information's Special Programs Division, who is providing information support for the campaign. Following the announcement, Bentley participated in a Food & Fitness event sponsored by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and Cornell Cooperative Extension Service.

The event, held at the Metropolitan Building in New York, kicked off the New York Food & Fitness year and included participation by the Governor's office, Mayor's office, and the New York Food & Agriculture Council.

The purpose of the Food & Fitness campaign, initiated in 1983 by USDA, is to increase public awareness of the abundance and variety of foods produced by American agriculture, and the role of proper diet in maintaining good health and physical fitness.

For further information contact: Lillie Vincent, USDA-OI, Special Programs Division, Rm. 536-A, Washington, DC 20250. Telephone (202) 447-8157.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS AVAILABLE

The "International Agricultural Programs and Agricultural Communications" conference proceedings are now available. The conference was held in St. Louis on Feb. 13-15, 1985, and was sponsored jointly by the Association of U.S. University Directors of International Agricultural Programs (AUSUDIAP) and the Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE). Copies are available for \$10 each and can be ordered from: Publications Distribution, Winrock International, Route 3, Morrilton, AR 72110. The publication number is ISBN 0-933595-01-8.

QUESTIONNAIRES TO HELP IMPROVE SERVICE

The Office of Information (OI) recently sent out questionnaires about the services provided by OI and its divisions to 284 agency employees. The names of these employees were provided by the agency information offices.

With the exception of the Design Division, which sent out a questionnaire earlier this year, each OI division had a separate questionnaire.

The Director's office has stressed to OI employees the need to provide quality service to its "customers" -- the agencies and the Secretary's office.

The purpose of the questionnaire is to receive feedback from these customers in an effort to promote quality service. OI will use these answers and comments to help evaluate its services, make needed improvements, and become more effective and responsive to the agencies and public.

Deadline for return of the questionnaire is November 15. For further information, contact: Carrie Pollard, OGPA, Rm. 402-A, Washington, DC 20250. Telephone (202) 447-4614.

PROGRAM AGENCIES POLLED

- ... APHIS informs travelers about quarantine laws.
- ... SCS information programs encourage farmer participation in the conservation reserve, and
- ... Extension is promoting Food and Fitness.

To get a better handle on the information goals of USDA's 23 program agencies, an ad hoc group of Office of Information staffers has polled the agencies for their goals. The three above are examples from the poll and indicate the variety of topics USDA information people communicate about.

The Department-wide goals summary will be used to: (1) have a central source of all agency information goals for use by USDA information personnel; (2) provide on-going information activities, such as Radio-TV's "A Better Way," and News Division's feature service, with topics for inclusion in their daily services; and (3) look for common theme areas among the agency goals which can then be built upon for major information campaigns to be conducted by OI.

FSIS MEAT AND POULTRY HOTLINE

On July 1, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) launched a nationwide toll-free Meat and Poultry Hotline. The hotline answers questions about proper handling of meat and poultry, how to tell if it's safe to eat, and how to better understand meat and poultry labels. It can also be called to report problems with meat and poultry products, such as foreign objects or if there is a strange odor or smell.

The toll-free hotline replaces an earlier one in which consumers called in at their own expense from around the country. It now receives as many calls in one month (2,000) as it used to get in one year! Specially-trained home economists staff the hotline, which is part of FSIS Information and Legislative Affairs Staff.

The number to call in the Washington area is (202) 447-3333. The toll-free number for outside Washington is 800-535-4555. These numbers are accessible by Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf. The hotline is in operation from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday-Friday, except holidays.

LIBRARY SEEKS DONATIONS

USDA's National Agricultural Library (NAL) is seeking donations of books, journals, reports, audiovisuals, maps and computer software relating to agricultural research, study and history. NAL is especially interested in hard-to-find, ephemeral materials, particularly those published in small quantities and not generally disseminated. Documents produced in Africa, Asia, and Latin America often fall into this category, as do certain U.S. materials that do not appear through the conventional publishing distribution.

Rare or unusual items are also desired, as are collections focusing in depth on a single topic, such as food irradiation, remote sensing, or agent orange. In addition to published sources, the NAL also collects agricultural diaries, manuscripts, and other unpublished documents that contribute to a better understanding of agricultural topics. Material is desired regardless of language, country of origin, age, format, or condition.

If you would like to add to this collection please call the Gift and Exchange Office on (301) 344-3732, or write to: Head, Acquisitions Branch, Room 112, National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, MD 20705.

LIBRARY EVALUATING LASER VIDEODISK

USDA's National Agricultural Library (NAL) is evaluating the use of laser videodisk technology as a means of disseminating agricultural information.

The focus of the evaluation is the potential of laser videodisk technology used in conjunction with microcomputers for storage and dissemination of agriculturally related full-text data bases. In September 1984, NAL contracted with LaserData, Inc., of Cambridge, Mass., to develop a system utilizing these two technologies.

Since end user experience is a critical part of this evaluation, the system is installed in three locations: NAL, Purdue University Library, and the National Pork Producers Council in Des Moines, Iowa.

Laser technology has the potential to significantly change the means by which publications and data bases are stored, distributed, and used. The results of this evaluation will provide data on the user acceptance of microcomputer/laser videodisk systems as a means of access to textual agricultural information.

Videodisk technology is based on laser optics which use light beams to read and write data. The result is a data storage technique which offers very high density, high quality video, random access and a mixed storage format utilizing both digital and analog data. The videodisk/microcomputer evaluation at NAL will provide significant information on the potential uses of computer technology for information access and delivery.

For further information contact: Pamela Q.J. Andre, Chief, Information Systems Division, NAL, at (301) 344-3813.

FOREST SERVICE ESTABLISHES NEW PROGRAM

The U.S. Forest Service (FS) recently established the Forest Service's Black Colleges and Universities Comprehensive Program and added a program manager under the Deputy Chief for Research. The main objective is to use the human resources of black colleges and universities to enhance Forest Service activities.

Dr. Lincoln Moore, formerly a research entomologist at the North Central Forest Experiment Station is program manager.

OREGON OFFERS SECOND GUARD DOG PUBLICATION .

In March 1985, the Oregon State University Extension Service announced a series of publications on dogs that guard sheep and goats. These are not herding dogs; raised with sheep, they guard flocks in states across the United States.

The manuscript is now ready for the second title, "Raising and Training a Livestock-Guarding Dog," by Jay Lorenz, Extension specialist for OSU's guard dog project, and Lorna Coppinger, faculty associate, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA. They build on years of tests at Hampshire College and the USDA Sheep Experiment Station, Dubois, ID.

Sections of the manuscript include basic behaviors (trustworthy, attentive, protective); raising pups; solving problems (usually related to basic behaviors); raising second or replacement dogs; and agencies and publications that provide assistance to owners. We'll use 4 photos.

If you'd like to review the manuscript, write James A. Leadon, Agricultural Communications, Administrative Services Bldg. 422, OSU, Corvallis, OR 97331 or electronic mail AGS1951.

AGRONOMY MEETING TO BE HELD IN CHICAGO

The annual meetings of the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, and Soil Science Society of America will be held Dec. 1-6, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago Hotel and Chicago Marriott Downtown Hotel. The theme is "Agronomy: Science Serving Mankind." Topics to be discussed include: toxic substances in the food chain; breeding crops for better yields; remote sensing; conservation tillage; cell tissue culture; soil, water, and wind erosion; turfgrass; and soil testing and fertility. Over 1,800 papers will be presented throughout the week of activities.

For detailed information and registration, contact: American Society of Agronomy, 677 South Segoe Road, Madison, WI 53711. Telephone (608) 273-8080.

4-H CONGRESS TO BE HELD

The Chicago Hilton will be the site of the 4-H Congress to be held Dec. 1-5, in Chicago, Ill.

For further information contact: 4-H National Council, (301) 656-9000.

INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Any items, comments or inquiries should be sent to Denver Browning or Nancy Bevis, Office of Information, Room 536-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250 or AGR209 or AGRO01 mailboxes on the ITT Dialcom system, or call (202) 447-7454.

